

Spofforth Park

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Spofforth – Lay-by next to Spofforth Castle. (SE 362512)
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer Map 289 Leeds, Harrogate, Wetherby and Pontefract.
Distance	8.1 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This very easy circular 8 mile walk around Spofforth Park has the advantage of providing a couple of pubs for lunch half way round, in the upmarket villages of Kirkby Overblow, so it ideal for conditions where you might not want to picnic. In fact, there are few places where a picnic would be particularly convenient.

There is also a pub at Sicklinghall if you cannot wait!

“Park” in this sense is little more than an expanse of grassland which no doubt provided the hunting sport for the famous and powerful de Percy family who, in the 13/14th centuries, owned Spofforth castle from where the walk starts.

Spofforth Castle, now a ruin, sits in the centre of Spofforth village and there is a small lay-by alongside where you can park. It does quickly fill though.

Spofforth is on the A661 between Harrogate and Wetherby.

There can be some very muddy sections after wet weather.

Start: At the lay-by with your back to the castle (SE 362512), turn right and walk along the main road (A661) for just under half a mile. Turn right at Park Mount (SE 366507). This is a cul-de-sac and the footpath starts between the 4th and 5th house from the end, on the right. There is a fingerpost pointing to it on the opposite side of the road on a telegraph pole.

Walk along the track (which services garages) and turn left behind the houses. Head down the field to the right of a couple of shed/stable buildings.

The route crosses a narrow field and arrives at a stile into a roughly triangular field. Go straight across to the opposite corner.

In the next field, head for a spot about half way along the opposite side of the field where you cross a stile (SE 369492). Continue ahead, passing to the left of a small copse of trees. Follow this broad track until you reach a ‘T’ junction of tracks and turn right (SE 369492).

The track becomes metalled and ends at the junction with Main Street, Sicklinghall. Turn right.

Walk right through the village passing the two village ponds (one at each end of the village) and along the road. Ignore the first bridleway off to the right. The road bends slightly left and just after this, turn right on another bridleway (SE 352481). The

fingerpost indicating it is on the opposite side of the road and the turn is just before Paddock House lane.

You are on a broad track and after about 300 yards, turn left indicated by a blue public bridleway sign (SE 350483)

On reaching a junction of bridleways indicated by a large post with several blue arrows on it, go right.

After going through a gate, the wide track narrows to a footpath between hedges for a while before widening again and reaching a road (SE 329488). Turn right to Kirkby Overblow.

Follow the road as it bends right in the village passing the Star and Garter and Shoulder of Mutton pubs and then left. Opposite All Saints, Primary School, cross a stone stile on the right and go through a kissing gate (SE 325494).

Follow this to a brick farmhouse and cross another stile and turn left. After passing the buildings, bear right to the corner of the field where there is a large metal gate and a yellow arrow on the gatepost.

The path follows a stream. Look out for an arrow indicating where the footpath goes left.

Follow the track as it curves along the left hand side of each of the fishing lakes and turn right on the broad track (SE 332498). When another track joins from the left, keep straight ahead and similarly, further on, when a track joins from the right.

Keep more or less straight ahead and through a large gate with a fingerpost for "Spofforth".

The path goes along by the right hand side of the trees and at the end of the field, goes left to cross the stream, then turn right to follow it.

The path passes under the old railway viaduct and arrives at Spofforth Castle. Turn right to get back to the lay-by.

